



# The Weekly Page

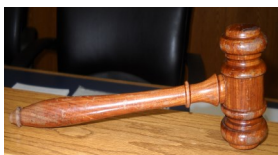
VOLUME 11 ISSUE 12

APRIL 3, 2015

## Pages Learn About Legislature



### Pages Write Bills, Hold Mock Hearings



During the first three days of their week, pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state. Criteria for writing a good bill was discussed before students selected issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates to formulate official-looking bills in preparation for a mock committee hearing on Thursday. Pages also wrote media releases for their bills which are included in this newsletter.

Pages read their bills and “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. Each bill was voted upon resulting in a “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation that determines whether the bill continues on in the legislative process. Because pages are in the Page School for only two hours a day for one week, there is not sufficient time to fully develop the final versions of their bills. However, the process of writing and presenting their own bills provides an excellent exposure to the real legislative process.

### Page School on the web

The Page School has its own web site. You can find us at: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool> This newsletter has been posted there.

### The Homeless are Leaving the Streets!

Olympia – Yesterday, Representative Connor McClean and Magdalene Marsh introduced House Bill 1000 which addresses the issue of housing for the homeless. “The bill is a good one because the bill provides housing for all the homeless,” said Rep. McClean. This bill helps reduce the amount of homeless people in Washington State by providing them with an apartment and a counselor. The money needed for this has been made possible by using some of the money that goes towards paying the Emergency Room bills, police interventions, and jail for the homeless. Rep. McClean and Rep. Marsh have also started a



charity, “Housing for Homeless”, which will donate all of its profits towards funding these homes. This can help reduce the homeless contracting fatal diseases, such as hypothermia. The counselors provided will also help the homeless become more self-sufficient. This bill can save many lives and provide a basic necessity for living.

### Hope for Health: Help Is on the Way for Suicidal Teens

Olympia – Senate Bill 7711 was introduced yesterday, March 31, 2015 by Senators Seki Berg, Caralina Casperson, and Rachel Hartman. “This bill addresses the issue of suicide prevention. The bill will reduce suicide rates in teens and promote



mental health awareness,” said Sen. Hartman. Every year, 1 in 20 Washington students develops suicidal tendencies. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in Washington for people ages 10-24 years, following fatal accidents.

The Legislature will call for all schools to expand their suicide prevention programs for grades 7-12. It will require mandatory wellness checks to properly and thoroughly assess the mental state of each student. These routine checks will transpire every 60 days for students categorized as “no-risk.” If the student is considered “at-risk” for suicidal attempts, the mental wellness checks will be increased to every 30 days. Criteria for determining “at-risk” students includes mental illness, family medical history of mental illness, unstable family situations, history of substance abuse, and individuals struggling with gender or sexuality identity. This program will be enacted with money redistributed among the healthcare bracket and with federal grants.

### Big Ideas in Government

Throughout the week pages grappled with understanding the three “big ideas” for a representative government: governing is a complex process, successful democracies rely on responsible citizens, and government affects our life every day. As they participated in daily discussions and group activities, listened to guest speakers, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding of these concepts deepened. Class activities introduced new vocabulary words, explained legislative procedures, and explored the bill writing process. On Friday, they individually wrote about one of these “big ideas” to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.

### Electronic Cigarette Safety

Olympia – House Bill 1001 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Joshua Beddall, Steven Donaldson, and James Donaldson. “This bill addresses the issue of electronic cigarettes. In order to protect non-smokers, the Legislature will implement the same restrictions on electronic cigarettes as apply

to regular cigarettes. The bill will help protect non-smokers from coming in contact with the harmful contents in e-cigs,” said Rep. Beddall. E-cigs will be treated as nicotine cigarettes and will be taxed at 95% of their full cost. E-sigs will be banned from public areas including schools, parks, medical facilities, hotels, recreational facilities (water park, pool, etc.), and airports. This bill will make it a healthier environment for non-smokers and animals.



### Easier Way for Homeschool Reimbursement



Olympia – Senate Bill 6012 was introduced yesterday by Senators Andrew Sagert and Matthew Phillips. “This bill addresses the issue of homeschool reimbursement. The bill will reimburse homeschool families,” said Sen. Sagert. The bill will give

homeschoolers a reimbursement through their taxes. The Legislature will enact a yearly tax refund of 15% sent directly to homeschooled families. This refund of their taxes will not be regulated by the public school system. A quote from Ralph Davenport, R-Boiling Springs of Iowa, says school districts collecting taxes from parents whose children are homeschooled is unjust. All students are entitled to a fair education and many parents chose homeschooling as an option for education.

### Representatives Stop Bark and Start Bite

Olympia – House Bill 2087 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Allison Campbell and Erynne Stoner. “This bill addresses the issue of animal shelters. The bill will make animal shelters well-funded,” said Rep. Campbell. The bill would make all pet food bags taxed 1 dollar per bag which will be put to building more animal shelters. While animal food in cans will have a 25 cents tax put to this funding purpose. The money from these taxes will be put into building shelters. It will also help fund the cost of taking care of these animals.





## Kinship Improved

Olympia – Senate Bill 6823 was introduced yesterday by Senators Robyn Muilenburg, Silvio Renna, and Gabriel Patterson.

“This bill addresses the issue of kinship compensation. The bill will “provide equal compensation for kinship care providers as the state gives for foster care



providers,” said Sen. Renna, Muilenburg, and Patterson. Due to the lack of compensation, support and stipends, it is more common for the family members *not* to foster or care for another family child in need. This results in more children at risk of unfit or unready foster parent(s) who may not fully provide or care for the child. Furthermore, for a relative to be reimbursed for the financial strain of raising a child, they must complete a long, arduous licensing process. This is an additional disincentive to the fostering of kin. The Legislature will reduce the license obtaining process for members of kin, who already have children, by eliminating the 24-hour training program and other lengthy processes. This solution will further be strengthened by placing a priority on the kin of the foster child during the process of finding a foster home.

## Need Drivers Ed?

Olympia – The issue of online driver’s education was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Representatives Leia Fisher and Emily Clark introduced House Bill 1003. “Our

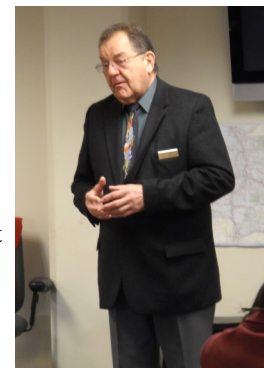


bill will create another, more convenient, drivers’ education option for students,” said Rep. Clark. We want to make driver’s education more accessible to students under 18 years old by providing a driver’s education course

online. This will reduce costs, be more convenient for students, increase opportunity, and make it more accessible.

## Guest Speakers Visit Page School

This week lobbyist **Steve Lindstrom** joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. He spoke about what led him to his current position and shared insightful information about the legislative process and other aspects of government. Pages were able to interact with him by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker’s questions.



## School of (Later) Clock

Olympia – House Bill 2415 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Leo Spencer and Alex Field. “This bill addresses the issue of school start times. The bill will increase test scores, sleep, and overall health of teenagers,” said Rep. Spencer.

The current school start times leave



no time for many students to eat breakfast and leaves the students tired during the day, making learning much more difficult. Teenagers also have different sleep schedules than other ages. They usually get tired by 10 or 11 PM, so early school times makes it very difficult to get the recommended doses of 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep each night. This lack of sleep can lead to health problems, such as depression and obesity.

## Competitive Edge Results in Jeopardy Win



On Friday, pages tested their knowledge of the legislative process in a spirited game of *Jeopardy*. Winning teams were awarded certificates and brightly colored stickers that they wore proudly for the rest of the day.

Watch us live at [TVW.org](http://TVW.org)

Search for “Page School” in the Archives to watch yourself in the committee hearings.

## Later School Start Times

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Madison Waldo and Alexis Walker introduced Senate Bill 5792 which addresses the issue of school start times. “The bill is a good one because it will help the teens get the amount of sleep that they need for the next day ahead,” said Sen. Waldo and Walker. The Legislature will require all schools to start no earlier than 8:20 am.

A later school start time will help be aligned with a teen’s natural sleep and wake cycle. This will help their bodies wake up and be attentive in class and result in less teen-caused accidents. This will impact positively on teenager’s grades, attendance, and overall moods of their everyday life.

## Protection for Minors Seeking Abortions

Olympia – Yesterday, House Bill 2596 was introduced by Representatives Erica Linde, Daisy Valdez, and Brittany Schuster. “This bill addresses the issue of minors and abortions. The bill will require minors to have parental notification when seeking an abortion. Whoever is performing the abortion must meet with a legal guardian before performing the abortion,” said Rep. Valdez. In Washington State there was no law requiring parental involvement in minors seeking abortion. This bill will require the minors’ parent/legal guardian to have an in-person meeting with whomever is performing the abortion forty-eight hours prior to the abortion. 40% of minors obtaining abortions do not involve their parents. About 86,000 women younger than 18 had abortions in 2002 nationwide. Many states always have legislation regarding this issue and Washington should join them. Parental/legal guardian awareness will protect the minor, physically and mentally. With a parental/legal guardian aware, they can provide guidance and seek proper health professionals.



## Math Classes to Match Desired Occupations

Olympia – The issue of math classes was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Representatives Mitchell Woodbury, Gabby Root, and Christian Knutson introduced House Bill 1254. “Our bill will require high schools to offer more diverse math classes,” said Rep. Knutson. Most high schools only have a couple math classes, such as calculus. Studies showed that only 5% of people in the United States use calculus in their daily job. The Legislature will require high schools to offer a diverse range of alternative math classes including, but not limited to, statistics, business management, budget management, personal finance, and economics. By implementing these additional classes, time will not be spent on other inept classes. The time will be more successfully executed to help teach general usage in daily applications. By requiring high schools to offer more diverse math classes, we can make sure that kids can learn the math needed to prepare them for their desired occupation.



## Supreme Court Presentation and Tour

This week the pages had a unique opportunity to hear a presentation about the Supreme Court and to take a tour of the Temple of Justice. This opportunity was designed specifically for the legislative pages. Justice Stephen González explained the functions of the Supreme Court and the type of cases that are heard. Pages were able to ask questions of interest to them.

Then Cindy Phillips took them on a customized tour of the law library. She also took them to Justice Fairhurst’s chambers which was a unique treat.





## The Truth within Body Cameras

Olympia – Senate Bill 5999 was introduced yesterday by Senators Ishaan Chainani, Matthew Zinn, and Ryan Garza. “This bill addresses the issue of body cameras. The bill will hold police and citizens more accountable of their actions,” said Senator Garza. In order to help determine guilt in either the officer



or civilian, the Legislature will require body cameras for each police officer. This bill will be able to hold both sides accountable with footage of the scene as evidence. A police officer in St. Louis swore that a man trying to kill

her was at least 12 feet away when she shot him. But powder burns noted in an autopsy put the real distance at less than 4 feet. When this case was sent to court, the judge did not know what to make of the situation. Who was guilty? Who was innocent? We will never know without the power of body cameras.

## Passing Classes for High School Sports

Olympia –Senate Bill 7399 was introduced yesterday by Senators Harriet Sander, Linda Huang, and Sandra Lopez. “This bill addresses the issue of high school sports. The bill’s purpose is to set a higher standard for student athletes,” said Sen. Sander, Huang, and Lopez. In some schools you can play a sport if you’re passing all your classes, except one. What we think is that they should be passing all their classes to play a sport. Therefore the Legislature will require all students who play sports to maintain a passing grade in all classes. This will lead to higher averages of grades and GPAs in schools and counties in Washington State.

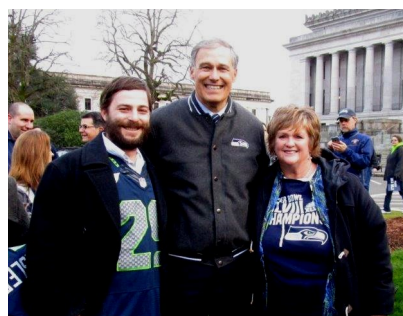


## Are High School Students Ready for School if Their Brain is Still Sleeping?

Olympia – The issue of school start time was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Representatives Isabella Valeriano and Esmeralda Villalpando introduced House Bill 3999. “Our bill will prevent sleep deprivation and related health problems,” said Rep. Villalpando. The Legislature will require that all public high schools in King County start no earlier than 8:00 am as part of a two year pilot program. It was found that 60% of children under the age of 18 complained of being tired during the day, according to parents. While 15% said they fell



asleep at school. Experts recommend that teens get 8.5 to 9.5 hours to sleep per night. 85% of teens get less than 8.5 hours of sleep. Sleep deprivation impairs the ability to pay attention. It affects creativity and communication and leads to poor grades and depressed moods.



## Experienced Educators

Sharon Heath is in her second year as the Page School teacher; however, she is definitely not new to the Washington Legislature having worked nearly 20 years for the Legislature’s computer support agency. She has also earned a Master’s in Education and has taught middle school as well as college students.

Leo O’Leary has been teaching and coaching in and around Olympia for the past ten years and is in his fourth session as a Page School teacher. “I really like the fact that I can help kids make their dreams come true through both education and athletics,” he said as he introduced himself on Monday.